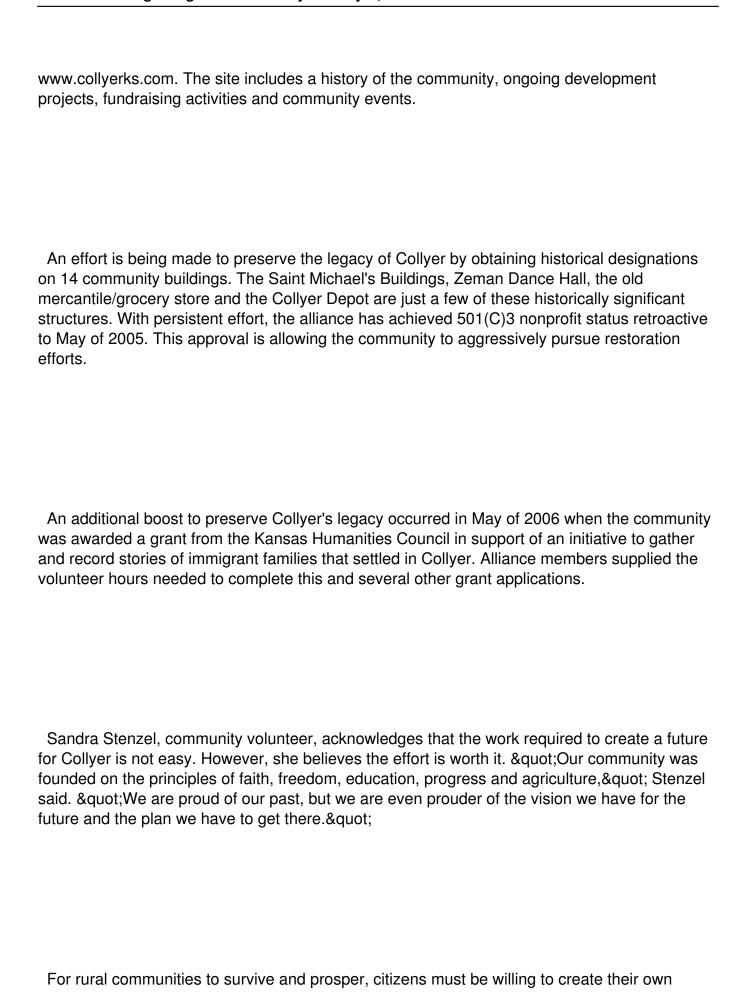
Recognizing the□ Community of□ Collyer, Kansas
Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the citizens of Collyer, Kansas for continuing efforts
to sustain and revitalize their community.
On September 26, 2004 that effort was formalized through creation of the Collyer Community Alliance. Donna Malsom, president of the alliance, said the organization was formed because residents want to see their hometown raise another generation of Kansans. "Our community is made up of hard working individuals who pull together to support businesses, projects and each other," Malsom said. "Through our combined efforts, we made a conscious decision to 'save' our community."
Despite its small size133 peopleCollyer is making a large commitment to its future. In the nearly 30 months since it was formed, the alliance has grown from zero to more than 200 paid memberships.

In order to obtain financing for community initiatives, the alliance has conducted a number of fundraising activitiesthe most famous of which are fish fries that are held every Friday evening during the Lenten season. In 2006, more than 1,000 plates were served. Having personally attended a fish fry, I can affirm that the food is delicious and the community spirit is inspiring.
Funds have also been raised by organizing Hunter's Burgers and Brats and Ground Hog Celebration Soup suppers, the Walsh Auction Lunch, Quinter School Forensics Tournament Lunch, WaKeeney Trash and Treasure Flea Market, Quinter May Day Celebration, Switchback Benefit Barn Dance and alumni celebrations. Money raised from these activities is supplemented by generous financial support from individuals, families, businesses and local units of government. Since its inception, approximately 75 entities have achieved " sponsor" status through the alliance.
This fundraising effort translates into impressive promotion of and support for the community. Last year, the Collyer Café opened in the refurbished Saint Michael's Convent. The alliance purchased the convent and the community donated well over 1,000 volunteer hours to this restoration project.
In July, the community hosts an After Harvest Music Festival which brings approximately 500 people to town. In October, the Fall Street Festival attracts more than 1,000 visitors to Collyer.
The alliance further promotes Collyer by maintaining an extensive website at



opportunities for success. Ongoing efforts to revitalize Collyer are an example of how hard work, vision and involvement support can create just such an opportunity. Citizens throughout Kansas are working together to enhance the quality of life in their communities. Collyer is a developing success story that demonstrates how teamwork and creative thinking can make a positive difference in rural America.